

SPEAKER TROUBLED BY PARTISAN BEHAVIOR IN CAMPAIGN FINANCE INVESTIGATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 4 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGRICH), the Speaker of the House.

Mr. GINGRICH. Madam Speaker, I just want to make one comment.

I do not intend to debate my colleague from California, but I would ask every Member of the House who just watched this colloquy to go back in your memory, as I did when I was a young teacher at West Georgia College, to remember what it was like to sit mesmerized watching the Watergate hearings and to see Senator Howard Baker not ask that they go back and investigate Lyndon Johnson; not ask that they go back and find a Democrat; not ask that they have this excuse, that excuse, the next excuse; not say, "Don't go after the little guys because you have to go after the big guys; you can't go after the big guys because you didn't go after the little guys;" not give 25 different, phony excuses.

Howard Baker set the standard for this country of a bipartisan, serious effort at getting at the truth. Howard Baker understood that Richard Nixon could not be allowed to take the entire Republican Party and the Constitution down in flames and that his job as a United States Senator was to get at the truth, and Howard Baker again and again and again cooperated with the Democrat Chairman Sam Ervin.

And I would simply ask every one of my colleagues: Look at what you just heard from the ranking Democrat, go back in your memory and remember Howard Baker's effort to find the truth, and then I think you will understand why we are being forced inch by inch to break through the stonewall and the cover-up despite the defense attorney tactics being used by Democrats who ought to be ashamed of it and ought to be helping us get at the truth rather than finding some flimsy excuse to avoid voting for immunity.

Mr. WAXMAN. Madam Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

PARTISAN BEHAVIOR IN CAMPAIGN FINANCE INVESTIGATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. WAXMAN. Madam Speaker, I am sorry the Speaker would not yield to me because I wanted to tell the Speaker that in the Watergate investigation

the Chairman, Sam Ervin, did not accuse the President of the United States of being a scum bag. He did not say that he was out to get him. Those were the very words of the chairman of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight in remarks in his district when he talked about what he was doing in this investigation.

Are we stonewalling an investigation that is proper and legitimate and is trying to get to the truth under a chairman who is interested in objectivity and facts? The chairman of our committee has acted from the very beginning in the most partisan of manners. He has refused to give us the basic rights to request subpoenas to look at Republican abuses. He has refused to allow the Democrats to play a role. In fact, he does not even let his own members play a role. They delegated authority to him, and he, in turn, has delegated it to his staff.

I might not be a Howard Baker, but the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. DAN BURTON) is no Sam Ervin.

If we would have followed from the very beginning the requests that I made that we do a bipartisan, non-partisan, fair investigation on campaign finance abuses, we would not be here a year and a half later having spent \$6 million with a likelihood that at the end of this year we will have spent \$10 million harassing witnesses. And I have a long list of people who have been abused of people who have been hounded either the Republican staff did not know the right people they were going after or people they have gone after to the point of just plain harassment. We would not have that sort of thing.

We have had witnesses in our committee who have been called in for depositions over five times to be asked the same questions over and over again.

Today, we have a woman coming in for the fifth or sixth time; and she already was in depositions in the Senate three separate days and asked the same questions over and over again; and she had never been accused of any wrongdoing. Does anybody know what that means when a witness is brought in day after day after day to answer the same questions over and over again, sitting there with her, as she must, with her attorney to whom she is paying out of her own pocket on a government salary?

Now witnesses have been brought into depositions by the unilateral action of our chairman, and those witnesses have been asked questions that no one ought to be asked about their personal lives. But, as a practical matter, do you know what it means? It means that they can object and then the ruling would go to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. DAN BURTON) as to whether they would be required to answer questions about their personal lives, their drug use or whatever, which has nothing to do with campaign finance abuse. And then the gentleman

from Indiana would rule they have to answer, and they could still refuse, and then they face a contempt of Congress.

Do you know what it is like for somebody to have the full force of the Federal Government, the Congress of the United States, staring at them and telling them they will be in contempt and may go to jail if they do not answer questions about their personal lives? So they answer it.

That is one area where people have been abused, but there is another area that I want to raise with my colleagues, and that is the action of the chairman to unilaterally release the tapes made of conversations that Web Hubbell had with his wife, with his children, with his friends when he was in this prison. He knew that the prison authorities were taping all conversations for security purposes, but he did not care about that because he was not talking about anything that breached security.

Ninety-nine percent of the tapes are conversations with his wife about the children, about their finances, about their sex life, about friends who may be in trouble whom they name, friends who may be having difficulties, the kinds of things that every person talks to a spouse about. And the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) has moved to release those tapes to the public.

It was bad enough that his staff was able to sit there in a very prurient manner and listen to those intimate conversations. I had asked my staff to do the same just so we knew what was on those tapes, and they were embarrassed having to listen to such personal conversations.

We have not had the conduct of a chairman who has acted properly, and we should not give him this authority to go any further.

PARTISAN BEHAVIOR IN CAMPAIGN FINANCE INVESTIGATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized during morning hour debates for 4 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, since the beginning of this investigation, the White House and the Democrats on our committee have done everything they possibly can to obstruct our investigation.

Mr. Ruff, the President's counsel, told us initially he was not going to claim executive privilege; this was last January, and then he did. And then we had to move a contempt citation against the President's personal counsel because he would not give us documents that were relevant to the investigation. And, finally, at the last minute, 6 months later, he gave us a letter saying we are going to give you what you want. And then in June he sent me a letter saying, to the best of my knowledge, to the best of my knowledge, you have everything that you have asked for. Three months